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A Flurry of Spy Cases

Penkovsky's Betrayal of Soviet Set Off Shock Waves Throughout the World

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THE world of espionage is still trembling from the shocks of the Oleg Penkovsky case.

Arrests, exposures or defections of agents, paid informers and double agents in several countries have affected the intelligence apparatus of Britain, West Germany, Sweden, the United States, the Soviet Union

and perhaps France, Penkovsky, the Soviet official who worked for the West, is dead—he was shot in Moscow after a summary trial in May—but the tremors in the subterranean world of spies and spying may long continue. Despite sensational aspects of late spy cases, the Penkovsky disclosure was the most important in three years; in fact, the breach in Communist security and espionage that it represented has not completely healed.

As a result of the Penkovsky case, most Soviet military attaches throughout the world, and many other Soviet nationals directly or indirectly collecting foreign intelligence, have been recalled to Moscow for interrogation. Some have returned to their posts; some have not.

Some, though there is no public verification of this, may have refused to return. Some, though not all, of the recent exposures or arrests in other countries have stemmed directly or indirectly from the Penkovsky case.

Penkovsky was a deputy head of the Foreign Department of the State Committee for the Coordination of Scientific Research.

He had contacts with people in high positions in the Soviet bloc, and he had confessed to having sold important Soviet secrets for 17 months to Greville Gurne, a British businessman who was tried with him and sentenced to eight years in prison and to United States Embassy officials.

With Penkovsky was so important has never been completely disclosed. But his contacts with the army, and with science and space development, and his persuasive and winning ways, made him an ideal man for the West. Money played a part in his decision, but the logical motivation—of a public mystique—was also a factor.

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Soviet Army marshals and officials who knew Penkovsky and perhaps trusted him have suffered.

Penkovsky may have benefited from army officers' dissatisfaction with the recent emphasis on rocket forces and from their puzzlement over the Chinese-Soviet ideological quarrel. In this connection, some observers say, it is significant that Soviet Army generals were sent some days ago to tell military audiences the Russian side of the argument between Premier Khrushchev and Mao Tse-tung, the Chinese Communist leader.

Penkovsky was presumably arrested in October, 1962, and it is assumed that he was observed by Soviet counterintelligence agents long before that. In April, 1962, an unscheduled plenary session of the Communist party's Central Committee took place. It apparently discussed military problems and was followed by extensive changes in the Soviet high command.

Marshal Filipp I. Golikov, the head of the Central Political Department of the Soviet armed forces, responsible for the political loyalties of the army, was succeeded by Aleksei I. Yefimov, a Communist party stalwart with almost no military record.

Marshal Sergei S. Biryuzov became chief of the General Staff, the third most important official in the Defense Ministry, sometime early this year and was succeeded as commander in chief of rocket forces by Marshal Nikolai I. Krylov, the fourth man to hold this new and highly important post since 1960.

Nikolai Y. Galay, a student of Soviet affairs at the Institute of the Study of the U.S.S.R. at Munich, Germany, declared in a recent paper that the plenary session of the Central Committee in April probably encountered "considerable disagreement" about a number of military questions.

These differences apparently centered on the size, composition and organization of the armed forces and on their equipment and discipline.

These signs and many other—including the temporary emergence of Marshal Georgi Zhukov, who before his retirement had been the most powerful Soviet military figure—indicated strong differences within the armed forces between the armed forces and the party hierarchy.

The conclusion of security experts about the Penkovsky case and the spate of other recent espionage cases can be summed up as follows:

The policy differences within the Soviet armed forces have been submerged but probably not completely reconciled.

A comb-out of the Soviet espionage apparatus is being completed.

The Central Intelligence Agency and the Federal Bureau of Investigation appear to have done an effective job.

West German intelligence agencies have long used many double agents, some of whom have defected in the past. Recent disclosures that some of its agents were Soviet spies may not have been the complete surprise they seemed to be.

The French security services, which before President de Gaulle's assumption of power were among the weakest in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, are now far more effective. Worry about French security, once prevalent in Washington, has been transferred to British security.

Effect of Swedish Case

Col. Stig Wennerstrom, the figure in the Swedish spy case, undoubtedly passed to the Russians important Swedish secrets and some NATO and United States data. Sweden's defenses, however, are keyed to turning back or delaying a Soviet amphibious or airborne assault across the Baltic Sea, and to holding off until Western help could intervene.

The sites of most of Sweden's airfields, underground hangars and other important works were undoubtedly known to Moscow before. Even if complete details on Swedish defenses and operational plans were disclosed, the result could be greatly influenced.

European strategy: Swedish defenses have never been considered a major element in the defense of Western Europe.

Breaches in NATO security do not necessarily mean breaches in United States security. Most United States secrets are available to the United States intelligence officers who follow two systems of classification—United States, and NATO. United States papers are channeled and controlled separately.

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